

DUXBURY LIBRARY HAS 100-YEAR-OLD BOTANI- CAL COLLECTION

Gathered and Arranged by Elizabeth
Bradford 1836 — Collection Contains
168 Specimens

Nothing is more characteristic of the old New England life than the beginning of collections such as the Bradford collection of Duxbury plants and flowers just given to the Duxbury Library.

From just such beginnings as this came the impulse to the work of Agassiz at Harvard and to the later work of Shaler. Came also to the Peabody Museum collection and to the Museum of Natural History with its long story of public service.

"Observation, record, limited and just inference from the result of observation and record", said President Eliot, characterized the work at Harvard. And all the splendid story of natural history advance in New England which he summarized in the Harvard phrase come from such observation and record, as the old volumes of the Bradford collection illustrate.

Such was the impression received and so expressed by a recent visitor at the library after seeing the volumes of Duxbury wild flowers so beautifully mounted and indexed by class and order, Latin and common name, and the month in which the flower was found, nearly one hundred years ago, the patient and careful work of Elizabeth Bradford.

The Botany of Dr. Jacob Bigelow, that was used in classification, accompanies the gift and the three books placed in a beautiful chest which bears an engraved copper plate inscribed

WILD FLOWERS OF DUXBURY

Collected by
Elizabeth Hickling Bradford
1809-1890

The chest was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick B. Knapp of Duxbury. The collection containing 168 specimens, gathered from April to October, 1836, was presented by Mr. Knapp's mother, Mrs. Lucia Knapp of Plymouth, in fulfillment of the expressed wish of her aunt, "that eventually they should be placed in the Duxbury Library."

Elizabeth Hickling Bradford was the third of the four daughters of Captain Gershom Bradford and his wife Sarah Hickling. They lived in one of the three interesting old houses built by Captain Bradford in 1809 on Tremont street, in Duxbury. This was one of the old Duxbury families. All the daughters were accomplished botanists, all gathered and pressed flowers, but Elizabeth did her work so thoroughly, with such nicety and dainty skill were these specimens mounted and classified so beautifully that her collection was a model.

A young daughter of a summer resident of Duxbury began a similar work last year, not knowing of this earlier collection. It will be an impetus and inspiration in her further pursuit to see how many of Miss Bradford's specimens may be yet found in meadow, field and wood, in the Duxbury of to-day.